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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Illinois has 122 4-year colleges and universities  
3 offering bachelor's degrees; and

4 WHEREAS, Illinois is currently the 5th most populous state  
5 in the United States with, according to the U.S. Census Bureau,  
6 approximately 12,800,000 residents; and

7 WHEREAS, The U.S. Census Bureau has surmised that Illinois  
8 is comprised of a diverse demographic population comprised of  
9 the following ethnicities: 62% non-Latino White; 17% Latino;  
10 15% Black; and, 6% Asian; and

11 WHEREAS, The diversity of Illinois' population promotes  
12 the opportunity for students to meet and learn about and from  
13 people of all backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives; and

14 WHEREAS, The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 88% of  
15 Illinoisans 25 years of age and older have obtained at least a  
16 high school diploma or its equivalent and 32% of that same  
17 demographic have obtained bachelor's degrees or higher; and

18 WHEREAS, The Board of Higher Education (hereinafter "BHE")  
19 found in its 2015 Report to the Governor and General Assembly  
20 on Underrepresented Groups in Illinois Higher Education

1 (hereinafter the "Report") that "the main findings specific to  
2 enrollment among underrepresented groups from 2010 through  
3 2014 center on the drastic decrease in African American  
4 undergraduate enrollment (15.8% total decrease) and a  
5 corollary increase in Hispanic undergraduate enrollment (16.9%  
6 total increase)"; and

7 WHEREAS, In its Report, the BHE further noted that  
8 "unfortunately, far too many high school graduates are not  
9 prepared for college in essential areas like math, reading and  
10 science. According to the 2014-2015 Illinois State Board of  
11 Education's Illinois Report Card, just a quarter of high school  
12 graduates are college-ready in all four core subjects per ACT  
13 benchmarks"; and

14 WHEREAS, The BHE is responsible for the development and  
15 implementation of the strategic courses of action for  
16 sustaining and improving higher education; and

17 WHEREAS, The BHE made specific recommendations in its  
18 Report to address the issues with the drastic decrease of  
19 certain underrepresented groups in Illinois academia and the  
20 unreadiness of such students to meaningfully compete in the  
21 halls of Illinois institutions of higher learning; and

22 WHEREAS, Two of the BHE recommendations in its Report

1 address and are specifically tailored to: (1) increasing the  
2 enrollment of underrepresented groups in Illinois institutions  
3 of higher learning and (2) improving the preparation and  
4 readiness of high school students for their matriculation into  
5 institutions of higher learning; and

6 WHEREAS, According to the BHE in its Report, to promote  
7 enrollment increases in the underrepresented groups, a task  
8 force is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis and study in  
9 order to triangulate results from surveys, focus groups, and  
10 key stakeholder communities and to develop a plan of  
11 remediation addressing the associated decline of such student  
12 groups; and

13 WHEREAS, According to the BHE, to improve college  
14 readiness, it is essential that Illinois effectively address  
15 and accelerate its work in the re-design of the high  
16 school-to-college transition; to do so, BHE opines in its  
17 Report that the State should incorporate alternative  
18 strategies of "speeding up" learning for more advanced high  
19 school students and, alternatively, strategies of "catching  
20 up" high school students who are less advanced, as necessary;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, The Oxford English Dictionary defines a  
23 "laboratory school" as "an institution affiliated to a college

1 or university, combining both a teacher-training college and a  
2 school in which innovative or experimental teaching methods are  
3 researched and applied"; and

4 WHEREAS, In that same vein, Merriam-Webster's dictionary  
5 defines a "laboratory school" as "a school operated by a  
6 college or university and used especially for student teaching  
7 and the demonstration of classroom practices"; and

8 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has 9 public universities on  
9 12 campuses throughout the State; of those 9 public  
10 universities, there exists a dearth of laboratory schools to  
11 foster the necessary policies and strategies identified by the  
12 BHE in its Report; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
14 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE SENATE  
15 CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created a Underrepresented  
16 Groups in Academia Task Force within the Board of Higher  
17 Education; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall be composed of the  
19 following members, to serve without compensation:

- 20 (1) a member appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- 21 (2) a member appointed by the Minority Leader of the  
22 House;

- 1 (3) a member appointed by the President of the Senate;
- 2 (4) a member appointed by the Minority Leader of the  
3 Senate;
- 4 (5) a member appointed by the Governor;
- 5 (6) a member appointed by the Chairperson of the State  
6 Board of Education;
- 7 (7) a member appointed by a group representing  
8 principals in the State;
- 9 (8) a member appointed by a group representing  
10 African-American attorneys in the State;
- 11 (9) a member appointed by a group representing Latino  
12 attorneys in the State;
- 13 (10) a member appointed by a group representing  
14 attorneys concerned with the protection of American civil  
15 liberties;
- 16 (11) a member appointed by a group representing a  
17 federation of labor organizations; and
- 18 (12) 9 members, each appointed by a different board of  
19 trustees of a State institution of higher education; and be  
20 it further

21 RESOLVED, That a vacancy in the membership of the Task  
22 Force shall be filled in the manner in which the original  
23 member was appointed; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Task Force is charged with the following

1 tasks:

2 (1) perform an in-depth study and analysis to create  
3 strategies to sustain and grow Illinois's underrepresented  
4 group populations in institutions of higher learning;

5 (2) develop transparent and common placement criteria  
6 so that students, teachers, and parents understand what is  
7 required in high school to ensure enrollment in  
8 credit-bearing college courses;

9 (3) determine the feasibility of an increase in  
10 laboratory schools to support the high school-to-college  
11 transition for students;

12 (4) ascertain the viability of the creation and  
13 construction of State-owned and operated trade schools in  
14 Chicago, Rockford, Springfield, and the Metro-East area  
15 for non-college bound high school students, with an  
16 emphasis on the enrollment in those trade schools of  
17 students from underrepresented groups;

18 (5) ascertain the cause and effect of the drastic  
19 decrease of Black students enrolling in institutions of  
20 higher learning; and

21 (6) ascertain the cause and effect of the drastic  
22 increase of Latino students enrolling in institutions of  
23 higher learning; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Board of Higher Education shall provide  
25 any necessary administrative support; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall elect a chairperson  
2           from its membership and shall have the authority to determine  
3           its own meeting schedule, hearing schedule, and agendas; and be  
4           it further

5           RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall submit a report  
6           concerning its assigned tasks to the Governor and General  
7           Assembly no later than December 31, 2018.